

## Claims

1. An ink supply method comprising, in a method where  
supply of ink from an ink container to an ink fountain where  
the ink is temporarily stored between the ink is discharged from  
5 an ink container and the ink is supplied to the inner peripheral  
surface of a printing drum is started when the amount of ink in the  
ink fountain becomes smaller than a first threshold value and  
is terminated when the amount of ink in the ink fountain becomes  
not smaller than a second threshold value after the supply of ink  
10 is started,  
the elapsing time from the start of the supply of ink is  
measured and  
it is recognized that the ink container is exhausted when the  
measured elapsing time from the start of the supply of ink becomes  
15 longer than a predetermined inkless time before the amount of ink  
in the ink fountain becomes not smaller than the second threshold  
value after the supply of ink is started,  
the steps of  
reading out a parameter from a storage means which is provided on  
20 the ink container to store a parameter representing an inkless time  
corresponding to the kind of the ink in the ink container, and  
setting the inkless time on the basis of the parameter.
2. An ink supply method comprising, in a method where  
supply of ink from an ink container to an ink fountain where  
25 the ink is temporarily stored between the ink is discharged from  
an ink container and the ink is supplied to the inner peripheral  
surface of a printing drum is started when the amount of ink in the  
ink fountain becomes smaller than a first threshold value and  
is terminated when the amount of ink in the ink fountain becomes  
30 not smaller than a second threshold value after the supply of ink  
is started,  
the elapsing time from the start of the supply of ink is  
measured and  
it is recognized that the ink container is exhausted when the  
35 measured elapsing time from the start of the supply of ink becomes

longer than a predetermined inkless time before the amount of ink in the ink fountain becomes not smaller than the second threshold value after the supply of ink is started, the steps of

measuring the ceasing time from interruption of printing to  
5 resumption of the same,

reading out a parameter corresponding to the measured ceasing time from a storage means which is provided on the ink container to store a parameter representing an inkless time corresponding to the kind of the ink in the ink container and the ceasing time, and

10 setting the inkless time on the basis of the parameter.

3. An ink supply system comprising

an ink supply means which supplies ink in an ink container to an ink fountain where the ink is temporarily stored between the ink is discharged from an ink container and the ink is supplied to  
15 the inner peripheral surface of a printing drum,

an ink amount detecting means which outputs an ink supply starting signal when the amount of ink in the ink fountain supplied by the ink supply means becomes smaller than a predetermined first threshold value and an ink supply terminating signal when the amount  
20 of ink in the ink fountain becomes not smaller than a predetermined second threshold value,

a time measuring means which measures the elapsing time from the time the ink supply starting signal is output from the ink amount detecting means,

25 an empty ink container recognizing means which recognizes that the ink container is exhausted when the elapsing time measured by the time measuring means becomes longer than a predetermined inkless time before the ink supply terminating signal is output, and

an ink supply control means which starts the ink supply means  
30 supplying the ink in response to the ink supply starting signal and stops the ink supply means from supplying the ink in response to the ink supply terminating signal,

wherein the improvement comprises that the empty ink container recognizing means reads out a parameter from a storage means which  
35 is provided on the ink container to store a parameter representing

an inkless time corresponding to the kind of the ink in the ink container, and sets the inkless time on the basis of the parameter.

4. An ink supply system as defined in Claim 3 further comprising a ceasing time measuring means which measures a ceasing  
5 time from interruption of the action of the printing drum and resumption of the same,

wherein the parameter stored in the storage means represents an inkless time corresponding to the ceasing time and the kind of the ink in the ink container, and

10 the empty ink container recognizing means sets the inkless time on the basis of the parameter.

5. An ink container which is used for carrying out the ink supply method claimed in Claim 1 comprising a storage means which stores a parameter representing an inkless time corresponding to  
15 the kind of the ink therein.

6. An ink container which is used for carrying out the ink supply method claimed in Claim2 comprising a storage means which stores a parameter representing an inkless time corresponding to the ceasing time and the kind of the ink in the ink container.